



FACT SHEET

Buy Recycled

Read any good labels lately?



Did you know the “three-chasing-arrows” symbol doesn’t necessarily mean a product is made with recycled content or can be recycled in your community? It may just be a reminder for you to recycle. Read the label carefully for specific information on recycled content.

Here are some terms you need to know:

- **Recyclable products.** Items that can be collected and remanufactured into new products after they’ve been used. Recyclable does not equal recycled. These products do not necessarily contain recycled materials and only benefit the environment if people recycle them after use. Check with your local recycling program to determine which items are recyclable in your community.
- **Recycled-content products.** Made from materials that would otherwise have been discarded. The products may include: *pre-consumer content*, material such as factory trimmings, damaged or obsolete products and overruns generated by manufacturers, or *postconsumer content*, material that has served its intended purpose and is collected in recycling programs (glass, aluminum, plastic, cardboard, etc.)

Look for products with the highest percentage of postconsumer recycled content. When you buy these products, you help build a demand for material collected in community recycling programs.

Recycled content products



Recycled content products are not hard to find. No matter where you live, you probably have access to recycled content products. Some purchases will always have a significant amount of recycled content: steel, including cars, food cans, bicycles and appliances; glass bottles and jars; as well as most paper products.

Your support for recycling will pay even higher dividends if you purchase out-of-the-ordinary recycled content items like plastic lumber, floor tiles, carpet, clothing, roofing materials, reusable shopping bags, furniture, building insulation and many other products. Search the Internet using terms like “green products” or “recycled content products.” Encourage retailers and suppliers to carry more recycled-content products and to indicate in their catalogs which products contain recycled content.

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Division of Waste Management

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